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ABSTRACT

This report presents the results of phone surveys that examined Internet use following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Findings include: (1) in the first days after the attacks, the number of people using the Internet fell; (2) overall usage was down, but the people using the Internet were surfing aggressively; (3) there was a rise in Internet use for getting news; (4) fewer people used the Internet for fun activities or for things unrelated to news right after the attack; (5) in the final weeks of September, patterns of Internet use were returning to average levels; (6) television was the primary news source and the telephone was the primary communications tool even for Internet users; (7) a third of Internet users posted or read comments about the attacks on an Internet bulletin board, chat room, or listserv; (8) about a third of Americans had some trouble placing phone calls on September 11, and 43% or Internet users had some trouble accessing Web sites; (9) a modest number of people said they found the Internet useful in the aftermath of the attacks; and (10) 11% of Americans cancelled or postponed travel plans. The report describes postings to discussion sites, ways that individuals responded to the attacks (e.g., displaying flags, donating money), and how people first learned about the attacks. (MES)

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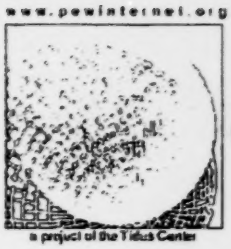

Pew Internet & American Life PROJECT

October 10, 2001

The commons of the tragedy

How the Internet was used by millions after the terror attacks to grieve, console, share news, and debate the country's response

Lee Rainie, Director
Bente Kalsnes, Research Assistant

Pew Internet & American Life Project
1100 Connecticut Avenue, NW – Suite 710
Washington, D.C. 20036
202-296-0019
http://www.pewinternet.org/

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Significant findings

In the days immediately following the September 11 terror strikes on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon the number of Americans online dropped. But there were signs by the end of September that online activity was returning to the usual levels.

At the same time, there were conspicuously more Internet users getting news online after September 11 than in previous periods. More than two-thirds of Internet users (69%) have used the Web to get news and information related to the attacks and their aftermath. Half of Internet users – more than 53 million people – have gotten some kind of news about the attacks online. Many online Americans have used the Internet to stay "on alert" for news developments by subscribing to email news updates and getting newscasts streamed to their desktops. Among those watching developments most carefully online are 33% of Internet users who have gotten information about the financial markets because of their concern about the economic impact of the terror strikes against America.

Perhaps the most significant development online after the attack has been the outpouring of grief, prayerful communication, information dissemination through email, and political commentary. Nearly three-quarters of Internet users (72%) have used email in some way related to the events – to display their patriotism, contact family and friends to discuss events, reconnect with long-lost friends, discuss the fate of the victims, and share news.

Others have gone to the virtual commons in chat rooms, bulletin boards, commemorative sites, and other online communities to describe their anguish, offer consoling words, broadcast their patriotism, and debate, even yell at times, about the meaning of September's events. A third of Internet users (33%) have read or posted material in chat rooms, bulletin boards, or other online forums and most report that those virtual commons were civil, rational places. Another 12% have gone to commemorative sites, many of which were created in the wake of the attack.

As e-newsletter writer David Weinberger wrote on September 27: "Now, for the first time, the nation and the world could talk with itself, doing what humans do when the innocent suffer: cry, comfort, inform, and, most important, tell the story together."

This response online was part of a larger collective experience. An astonishing 94% of *all* Americans – Internet users and non-users alike – have taken at least one step to respond personally to the assault on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. Some people have taken multiple steps:

- 78% have displayed an American flag at their home or business or elsewhere
- 58% have contributed to relief efforts; 3% of Internet users (more than 3 million Americans) have made donations to those relief efforts online
- 48% have attended a religious service
- 17% have tried to donate blood
- 10% have attended meetings about the attacks or their aftermath

It is important to stress that for all of the online activity that focused on the terror assaults, this was not a breakthrough moment for use of the Internet compared to other technologies, as some have argued. There was not a flight to new technologies from TV as a news source or from the phone as a communications tool. Indeed, there was heavy reliance on TV and the telephone even among the most committed and active Internet users.

The findings presented here come from two periods of phone survey work by Princeton Survey Research Associates for the Pew Internet & American Life Project. Both were done before last weekend's U.S. attacks on the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. The most recent findings cited here come from a survey done from September 20 through October 1, involving 1,029 adults 18 and over in the continental United States. Some 525 of them are Internet users. The margin of error on the entire sample is plus or minus four percentage points and on the Internet users is plus or minus 6 points. Some other findings come from a survey fielded from September 12 through September 19, involving 2,039 adults, some 1,138 of whom are Internet users. In that sample the margin of error is plus or minus two percentage points for the entire sample and plus or minus three points for the Internet users.

This report also cites Web traffic data from comScore Networks, a research firm in Reston, Virginia, that provides Internet usage intelligence to the public and private sectors based on a sample of 1.5 million global opt-in users. That data was made available at the request of the Pew Internet & American Life Project. Further information about that material can be provided by Dan Hess at 312-775-6477 and dhess@comscore.com. The firm's Web site is: http://www.comscore.com/.

Voices from the commons

An eyewitness account
johnreinan on The Well
Tue 11 Sep '01
This is an eyewitness account from a friend of mine. He e-mailed it to another friend, who forwarded it to me. I'm not able to contact my friend to get his permission to post this, so I'm leaving off his name. But I know he won't mind if I pass it along.

I keep playing this back in my head, and it just did not seem real, nor would I ever could have imagined a series of events happening such as this morning. It is true, everything seemed to be in slow motion. I arrived here Sunday night with my wife, she was going to spend the whole week with me. This week is my birthday. I reported to [xxxx] and [xxxx] yesterday at 200 liberty street for the next phase of the Wall Street Journal Redesign. Monday we just came up with the workload for the next few weeks, and built some page designs. I came back to the hotel at midtown had dinner with my wife [xxxx], where we discussed our days events and plans for tomorrow. [My wife] said she want to come in with me to the downtown area on Tuesday morning and visit the top of the World Trade Center. She found a 2 dollar discount coupon. The next morning we both ate breakfast and my wife decided she was not feeling well enough to join me this morning. So I left for work this morning at 8 a.m. I got on the number 9 train from Times Square, and read a chapter in my book. Before you know it, it was 8:40 a.m. and I was at the World Trade Center station at Cortland Street. I got off the train walked up to the street exit and right as I saw daylight, I heard a huge explosion and then many pieces of metal debris, some the size of car hoods, were falling all around myself and a very large crowd of people. We all responded by trying to go back in the train station exit, but there were too many people trying to exit, and so we all squeezed against the side of the world trade center. After a while the debris stopped falling we crossed liberty street, and looked up and saw the first tower engulfed in flames, eye witnesses said a plane crashed into the building high up. Then to my horror, I started seeing people jump to their deaths. As each person fell, I started praying. Many people fell, and we were not sure where to go or what to do. Then a loud noise of an aircraft became apparent, and I remember seeing a large airline jet smash into the next tower, followed by many flaming pieces falling all around us and many people being struck by debris and flaming pieces. I ran into an entryway of the building across the street and seeing many pieces of debris take out windows. Plus a large crowd outside being hit as they were on their way to work as pedestrians. At that point the police ordered a mass evacuation, and I remember thinking this was a terrorist act, it is just too coincidental too be anything but I decided to just start running north up Broadway, by the time I reach Chambers street, I kept trying phones to call my wife and say I was ok, nothing was working, all circuits busy, cell phone did not work. So I just got on a train and ran to my hotel room, my wife was in tears, I was shaking like a leaf. I was still shaking and very sad, then I witnessed the towers falling on the news channel, and I just stood there in disbelief. I am sad, angry, nervous, happy to be alive, but humbled by others deaths today. (all at the same time). I cant get the visions of bodies falling, I still pray for their families, the world will never be the same again. I am very sorry to be writing this actually.

A grief shared
LadyMarchHare on Beliefnet.com
9/30/01 4:22 PM
I cry at strange times in strange places and at the strangest triggers. Today I went grocery shopping and started crying when I noticed the biggest selling Halloween costume: A rack of Firefighter costumes. Kids want to be like their heroes and many kids have seen and decided that wrestlers and cartoon characters, comic book characters aren't heroic enough for them anymore. I cried while I watched a little boy try on the helmets. Right there in the store. Is it just me?

A call for revenge
musicman on the Well
2001-09-12
Uno what, heres how I'd repay the act. For each floor on the WTC towers - a total of 220 floors right ? ok one nuke for each floor. Thats 220 warheads, lets get rid of the evil in this world - The Middle East! Come on George W, show us your Texan attitude and make them pay!!!!

A call for calm
app2bcom on the Well
Tue 11 Sep '01 (11:33 AM)
I fully expect we will be living under martial law before the sun sets and perhaps for an extended period of time. Now THAT is scary. Please don't join the knee-jerk, hell-bent-on-revenge lynch mob that is already boiling up. In fact I would suggest that we all do whatever we can to quell any such continuing escalation of blind terror. Keep your heads, people. Get the facts. Don't believe the Corporate Media. Seek out independent investigative journalism. It Does Exist!

A warning against discrimination
master of spergulismo on the Well
Tue 11 Sep '01
So how do you expect this to be accomplished without giving the control addicts in our government the tools they want to suppress whoever they feel like? Whose civil liberties are going to have to go so that we can all be safe? Who gets to choose who's in a "terrorist" organization, and therefore may be suppressed? Remembering that our response to Pearl harbor was to lock up every American citizen with Japanese ancestry. And this suppression was used by many businessmen as an opportunity to buy up their homes and businesses at pennies on the dollar. Are we now going to blame all Palestinians (including the couple who own the store across the street from me and who are just as appalled as I am)? Are all Muslims now suspect? When you so eagerly call for the "elimination" of certain people, don't we first want to make sure they were involved? Once again we see how easy it is to blame all of the "other" for the acts of a few. And we don't even know who those few are.

A word of consolation from afar
Psanner on the Well
Sept. 11, 2001

Deepest condolences to you

Hi there, i am german, and following the news since 1pm CET. I was sleeping as this is the second day of my long awaited vacation. When i wake up and switched on the tv the first thing i saw was the first tower collapsing. My first thought was "hey guy - wake up from that bad dream here". Me and my wife still can't believe it. We hope that the tragedy does not spread any further as already enough hurt has been produced. Our deepest fears are that extreme counter reactions will happen now! Can this be the first step to a war? OK, let's stop that thought!

Analysis of findings

Riveting events

Americans were deeply affected by the terror strikes on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11. In the first days after the attacks, the nation was engrossed in the rescue effort, the investigation, and the stories that emerged from the attacks themselves. This meant that some people actually stayed off line as they watched TV and tried to absorb the enormity of what happened. It also meant that much of the "normal" online activity dropped significantly as people flocked to news sites, sent and read email related to the attacks, and visited virtual places where they could discuss the events and their aftermath.

In the days after the attack the number of people using the Internet fell, as did the number of people sending and reading email

The overall size of the online population of Americans was down in the days following the attack. About 51% of U.S. Internet users were online during a typical day during the period between September 12-19, compared to 56% during the days of the late summer and 59% of Internet users during February 2001.

Internet use was down at first – except for getting news

The percentage of online Americans doing key activities during a typical day dropped sharply in the days after the terror attacks on September 11, but then began to return to normal levels starting about 10 days after the attacks. The percentage of Internet users who say they...

Activity	Aug. 13-Sept. 10	Sept. 12-19	Sept. 20-Oct. 1
Went online "yesterday" for any purpose	56%	51%	57%
Send or read email	51%	42%	49%
Get news online	22%	27%	26%
Seeking hobby information	20%	10%	22%
Browsing for fun	20%	13%	20%
Doing work-related research	17%	13%	15%
Seeking medical or health information	5%	3%	5%
Buying products	4%	2%	2%

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project August-September surveys. Aug. 13-Sept. 10 N=1,351 and margin of error is ±3%; Sept. 12-19 N=1,138 and Margin of error is ±3%. Sept. 22-Oct. 1 N=525 and margin of error is ±6%.

Similarly, the overall use of email was substantially lower. In the days after the attack, 42% of Internet users were sending or reading email, compared to a typical day in August, when 51% of Internet users were sending or reading email, and compared to a typical day in February, when 53% of Internet users were sending or reading email. Even the heaviest users of the Internet, the truly wired cohort who usually go online every day and have plenty of Internet experience, were not quite as fervid in their use of the Internet in the days just after the attacks.

And these highly wired Americans were also using email a bit less. On any given day in February, our survey shows that 82% of the heaviest users of the Internet send or read email. That compares to the 71% who were sending and reading email on an average day during the period from September 12-19.

ComScore Network's traffic data illustrate that overall usage was down, but that the people using the Internet were surfing aggressively

On September 11, the Internet traffic-analysis firm found that 130 million people around the world used the Internet, down 18% from 159 million users on the immediately preceding Tuesday, presumably reflecting heavy TV viewing of the events of the day.

Online shopping dropped 58% in dollar sales, according to comScore.

The jump in surfing activity

How the events on September 11 changed what happened online

	Sept. 4-5	Sept. 11-12	Percentage increase
Number of site visits	1 billion	3.4 billion	240%
Number of page downloads	5.7 billion	21.2 billion	272%
Number of minutes spent online	8.2 billion	28.3 billion	245%

Source: comScore Networks.

However, among those who did use the Internet for information gathering, usage levels surged dramatically along every metric. The number of sites visited by those online more than doubled, as did the number of page downloads and the number of minutes spent online by those who had logged on.

The rise in Internet use for getting news

Many more people than usual were seeking news on the Internet in the days following the attacks. Pew Internet Project surveys show that on an average day online in the four weeks before the terror attacks, 22% of Internet users got some kind of news, often by chancing upon news items while they are browsing or doing other activities on Web sites. On the day of the attack, 28% of Internet users were getting news and in the period of September 12-19, 27% were getting news on a typical day.

Increasing use of government-related Web sites

Site	Percentage increase in unique visitors - Sept.11-12
panynj.gov (New York/New Jersey Port Authority)	7,715%
disasterrelief.org (a disaster relief portal run by the Red Cross)	2,342%
redcross.org	1,494%
fbi.gov	1,306%
nyc.gov (municipal site)	787%
whitehouse.gov	433%
fema.gov (the federal disaster relief agency)	173%
cia.gov	129%
state.gov (State Department)	83%
navy.mil	61%

Source: comScore

Overall, 50% of Internet users, or about 53 million people, went online looking for news about the attacks and the aftermath at some point in the first three weeks after attacks. As always, more online men were news consumers than women. Some 57% of men with Internet access sought news about the attacks and the aftermath, compared to 43% of women. By comparison, women were more likely than men to have sent emails to family and friends about the assaults.

Some have exploited personal news networks – their own cadre of online experts and group or community Web sites – to get more information and explore policy options.

Dan Hess of comScore reports there was a huge spike in international traffic to U.S.-based news Web sites in the days right after the attacks. That helps explain the remarkable increase in their usage. ComScore data show that on September 11 and 12 traffic to cnn.com grew 680% to 11.7 million unique visitors, traffic to msnbc.com grew 236% to 9.5 million unique visitors; traffic to cbs.com grew 819% to 1.7 million unique visitors, traffic to nytimes.com grew 206% to 1.7 million unique visitors, traffic to washingtonpost.com grew 225% to 1.2 million unique visitors, and traffic to usatoday.com grew 174% to 1.1 million unique visitors.

Similarly, comScore found there was enormous growth in visitors to some government-related Web sites. (See table on page 8.)

The information people were seeking online

69% of Internet users got some kind of information related to the terror attacks or their aftermath

	Percent Internet users
News about the attacks	50%
Information about financial markets	33%
Information about Osama bin Laden	23%
Information about Afghanistan	21%
Download pictures of American flag	19%
Information about victims or survivors of the attack	15%
Check flight status of someone's plane	13%
Information about Islam	13%
Visit commemorative Web site	12%

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project Sept. 20-Oct. 1 survey. N=525. Margin of error is ±6%.

Moreover, a significant number of Internet users went "on alert" via the Internet to make sure that breaking developments in the story were quickly transmitted to them. Some 15% of online Americans got audio or video versions of newscasts streamed to their desktops and 7% of Internet users signed up to get news alerts about the continuing coverage of the attacks and their aftermath.

Generally, people went to specific news sites with which they were familiar. Some 58% of online Americans did that. But more than a quarter of Internet users turned to search engines to dig for information; 23% used search engines to track down the information they wanted and 6% reported that they went to both search engines and news sites to get material.

Fewer people used the Internet for fun activities or for things unrelated to news right after the attack

In the aftermath of the attacks, there were considerably fewer Internet users going online to do things unrelated to getting news or using email to communicate. The number of people getting hobby news on a typical day between September 12-19 dropped by 50%; the number buying products online fell 50%; the number seeking medical information fell by 40%; the number browsing the Web just for fun dropped by 35%; and the number doing work-related research fell by 24%.

Still, there were important distinctions to note among different types of Internet users. Veterans used the Internet with much higher intensity than newcomers in the aftermath of the terror attacks. Those with a year or less of experience were the most likely to log on less frequently right after the attacks.

This is part of a larger trend. Many newcomers report that they are using the Internet less now than they were six months ago because they do not have enough time. In contrast, many veterans report they are using the Internet more than they did six months ago because they are doing more research, and in all likelihood devoting their time online to gathering news and information about the terror attacks.

Signs of the return to normalcy online

In the final week of September, a period before the U.S. retaliatory bombing against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, patterns of Internet use were returning to average levels. In the period between September 20 and October 1, 57% of Internet users were online on a typical day. The number of people sending and reading email on any given day use had risen, too. Between September 20 and October 1, 49% of Internet users were handling email.

Television was the primary news source and the telephone was the primary communications tool even for Internet users

Nearly all Americans, including Internet users, relied on television for news and the telephone for their urgent communications in the period right after the attack. Fully 79% of all Americans say that television was the source of most of their news – and 80% of Internet users report the same thing.

The figures are hardly different even for the most fervent Net users. Just 6% of the most wired Americans (those online for more than three years and who log on from home every day) say the Internet was the place they got most of their news.

These highly wired Americans were also just as likely as their offline peers to say they were getting most of their information from radio sources and from newspapers.

On the communications side, 63% of all Americans called a family member in the days following the attack and 55% called a friend. That compares to 30% of Internet users who sent emails to family members and 36% of Internet users who sent emails to friends about the attacks.

Some 13% of Internet users sent instant messages to others about the attacks.

America's virtual commons

A third of Internet users posted or read comments about the attacks on a Web site

Even the most wired Americans were wedded to the television and the telephone after the attacks

	All Americans	*The heaviest Internet users**
Main source of information		
Television	79%	80%
Radio	7%	6%
Newspaper	7%	7%
Internet	2%	6%
Talking with others	2%	1%
Communication activities: The phone was also used more by Internet users than by the general population		
Phone family member about attack	63%	75%
Email family member		38%
Phone friend about attack	55%	70%
Email friend		47%

**The heaviest Internet users are those who have more than three years experience online and who log on from home every day. They make up about 20% of all Internet users and about 11% of the whole U.S. adult population.*

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project Sept. 20-Oct. 1 Survey. All Americans N=1,029 and margin of error is ±3%. Heaviest Internet users N=260 and margin of error is ±7%.

bulletin board, in a chat room, or on an email listserv. The vast majority read material, rather than contributing their thoughts. Some 28% of Internet users were observers on the virtual commons; 5% of Internet users said they posted to such communities. Men were more likely than women to have written something in such places; and young Internet users (those ages 18-29) were by far the most likely to have read what others had said.

Asked about the discussions that were unfolding on bulletin boards, in chat rooms, and on email lists, 46% said the postings were mostly about how the U.S. should respond to the attacks, 22% said they were mostly about consoling those who were sad about the attacks, and 19% said they were mostly about ways people can personally deal with the attacks in their communities.

Asked to judge the nature of the online discussions they observed, most said they were civil rather than angry (57% vs. 37%), rational rather than heated (72% vs. 21%), and focused mostly on people rather than policy (57% vs. 35%).

Case studies from the commons

The Pew Internet & American Life Project monitored several online discussion sites in the days following the attacks, including 2,452 postings to the Yahoo September 11 bulletin board, 298 postings to the Beliefnet's After 911 channel, thousands of postings to Goggle's soc.culture.Afghanistan community, 23 postings to the International Women's Forum, and 2,009 postings to the Well filed in the Current Events section.[1] There were thousands of other comments in the Well in other sections and we examined a random number of them.

We found that there was a huge amount of activity at these sites after the attacks. The discussion often followed a pattern. The early postings on September 11 spoke of members' shock and disbelief. Many were like this one from Tori Hill in Yahoo's group: "This is absolute chaos... a sheer tragedy...how could this happen here?" Others reacted with fear and anger, such as this member of the Well: "I have numerous friends and business associates who work in the WTC complex. We are devastated. I want blood, now."

Since the telecommunication systems both in New York and Washington were overloaded that day, many could not reach friends on their phones and turned to the Internet in search of information on them. Online communities seemed to be an important source of information, according to some of the Well members. "People, please keep these reports coming," wrote one. "I have friends in New York but right now this is my only source of information. All the news sites are totally jammed." Others however, decided to turn off their computers: "This is definitely a case where online sources are going to lag well behind TV. It's on all the major channels. I think all Americans should be let out of work/school to watch; it's major history. What I mean is that this is one of those times to abandon your computer and go turn on a TV. Any TV."

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[1] The Yahoo url is http://groups.yahoo.com/group/sept11info/messages/1
The Beliefnet url is http://www.beliefnet.com/boards/index.asp
The Google url is http://groups.google.com/groups?hl=en&group=soc.culture.afghanistan
The International Women's Forum url is
http://www.internationalwoman.net/forum/topic.asp?TOPIC_ID=344&FORUM_ID=80&CAT_ID=1&Topic_Title=To+all+countries+affected+by+Tuesdays+attacks&Forum_Title=COUNTRIES
The Well is for paying members and the url is http://www.well.com/

Online communities were also places where people from different countries could come together and mourn. Messages of condolence came from the Philippines, Turkey, Sweden and Great Britain to the Yahoo site: "From the Philippines, we are shocked and angry at how innocent lives can be lost in this way. We can only sympathize."

At Beliefnet, a member was so emotionally and spiritually stricken by the attack that he decided to leave the group all together: "I don't know what I believe anymore. I am not even sure how I feel about God. I use to believe all things happen for a reason but have since decided that is an idiotic way to believe...I have decided to leave Beliefnet for a while and think things out. I have been a member nearly a year and met some pretty wonderful people. I will miss you all."

Others expressed appreciation for Beliefnet's site: "I can't seem to find happiness in my everyday life like I could before Sept 11. It really sucks.... Thanks for this topic, I guess I need to express my feelings and here is a good place to do just that."

After the shock and anger came another wave of postings. Many included links on how to contribute, where to give blood, how to make donations to relief organizations, first-person accounts, and suggestions on books to read. Lots of members pasted links in their messages to useful newspaper articles.

At the same time, more people started posting analysis and political comments on the consequences of the attacks. One in Yahoo's group wrote: "I fear he [President Bush] will use excessive force which will lead to more terrorist attacks and possibly war. I would feel so much better if Clinton was in office." A posting at the International Women's Forum was more optimistic: "I am not a Bush fan, I didn't like his dad and I don't like his brother, however he has my full support as leader of the country, his speech writers are remarkable and it [the President's speech to Congress on September 20] was delivered to perfection."

Eventually, criticism arose. Challenges to America's foreign policy were raised on most of the sites, like this posting on Google: "What's the difference between Osama Bin Laden killing thousands of innocent Americans in New York city by bombs, and George Bush killing thousands of innocent Iraqis in Baghdad by sanctions?" Others there had the opposite opinion: "Each terrorist should be executed by a firing squad. Each bullet should be dipped in hog fat."

Towards the end of September, the online community postings took another turn as the nation awaited the U.S. retaliation. Many focused on information related to Islam, Afghanistan, Pakistan, other countries in the Middle East, and evaluations of American foreign policy. One Well member asked: "Could we really win a war against the billion people of Islam spread all over the globe?" The reply she/he got was: "Without question. What are they gonna do, throw rocks at our Cruise Missiles?"

Then, people began to discuss the fate of U.S. troops. "We'd really better train our folks in the Rockies," said one writer at the Well. "I think they're the only mountains that even compare." Another suggested "training a little closer to the action and actual climate. Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, etc., are granting us permission to base our forces on their

territory and I'd bet folding money our special forces are undergoing rigorous training in undisclosed locations in those countries as we speak."

Email content

Another trove of communitarian activity was the email exchanges people had with their family, friends, and colleagues. In addition to checking in with family and friends, here are some of the other findings from our survey about the ways in which email was used:

- 46% of Internet users received or sent patriotic material by email.
- 33% of Internet users received or sent email prayer requests.
- 25% of Internet users received or sent email messages of consolation.
- 12% of Internet users sent emails to people they had not spoken to in years.
- 10% of Internet users got emails from people they had not spoken to in several years.
- 9% of Internet users received or sent accounts of survivors or victims.
- 2% of Internet users of Internet received email with hate material in it.

The gender differences in email

Online women are more likely than men to have used email for many kinds of communications

Received or sent email with ...	*Women*	*Men*
Patriotic material	51%	42%
Message to friends	39%	33%
Prayer requests	37%	28%
Message to family	33%	27%
Message of consolation	26%	23%

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project Sept. 20-Oct. 1 Survey. All Americans N=1,029 and margin of error is ±3%.

Trouble placing calls and using the Web

About a third of all Americans (32%) had some trouble placing phone calls on September 11 and about one-eighth of them turned to the Internet to make contact with loved ones and friends.

At the same time, 43% of Internet users say they had at least some trouble accessing the Web sites they wanted to consult for news about the attacks – 15% of Internet users say they had a lot of trouble in the first hours getting to a Web site. Of those who had difficulty 40% eventually reached the site they had tried at first and another 39% went to other sites to seek information about the attacks. But a fifth of those who had trouble simply gave up on using the Internet to get news about the attacks.

An overall assessment of the role of the Internet

A modest number of online Americans say they found the Internet useful in the aftermath of the attacks. In all, about half of Internet users (47%) said they got at least some modest benefit from their use of online tools. Some 34% said the Internet helped them learn more about what was going on and 30% said it helped them connect to people they needed to reach. Online men were more likely than online women to cite the benefits of the Internet for getting news about the terror strikes.

However, most of the people who actually used the Internet to gather news and contact key family and friends had a positive assessment of the role of the Internet in their lives following September 11. For instance, 67% of those who went to news Web sites for

material about the attacks said the Internet helped them learn more about what was going on. Similarly, 70% of those who emailed family members about the attack and 66% of those who emailed friends said the Internet helped them connect with people they needed to reach. And more than three-quarters of those who got news online or exchanged email about the assaults gave some kind of positive assessment about the role of the Internet in their communication or information-gathering.

Individual Americans respond to the attacks

In the first nine days after the attacks 40% of all American adults, about 76 million people, say they flew or displayed American flags; 32% (or about 61 million people) gave money to relief efforts; 12% tried to donate blood, and 12% attended meetings to discuss the attacks and their aftermath. According to the survey respondents we reached from Sunday, Sept. 16 through September 19, 40% of American adults attended a religious service in response to the attacks.

Some of Internet users who personally responded to the crisis said they learned about how to respond via an Internet source. For instance, 9% of Internet users who went to meetings after the attack learned about the gatherings on the Internet; 8% of the Internet users who tried to donate blood were inspired by an item they read online; 7% of the Internet users who went to a religious service say they learned of that service online; and 5% of those who donated money learned about organizations receiving contributions from the Internet.

Cancelled or postponed travel plans

Some 11% of Americans – more than 19 million people – say they cancelled or postponed travel plans after the terror assault. Those in households earning more than $75,000 and those with college educations were the most likely to have done this.

How people first learned about the attacks

Asked how they first heard of the attacks, about two-thirds of Americans heard from traditional electronic news media sources, TV and radio, and about a third (31%) heard about the assaults in conversation.

The figure for conversational exchange is remarkably high, possibly because the attacks took place during a time of day when many people were just congregating at their work places and probably because of the magnitude of the news. Half of those who heard about the attacks from other people heard it in a telephone call and it is likely the case that those conversations were shocked exchanges of the news. It was the kind of story that many people needed to bring to others' attention and needed to discuss with others right away.

How did you first hear about the terror attacks?	
Television	44%
Network news	20%
Cable channel	11%
Local news	9%
Talking with others	31%
Face to face	16%
On the telephone	15%
Radio	22%
Internet	1%

Source: Pew Internet & American Life Project Sept. 12-19 survey. N=2,039. Margin of error is ±2%.

Methodology

This report is based on the findings of a daily tracking survey on Americans' use of the Internet. The results in this report are based on data from telephone interviews conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates between September 12 and September 19, 2001, among a sample of 2,039 adults, 18 and older. Some 1,138 of them are Internet users. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling is plus or minus 2 percentage points. For results based Internet users, the margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3 percentage points. In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting telephone surveys may introduce some error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

The sample for this survey is a random digit sample of telephone numbers selected from telephone exchanges in the continental United States. The random digit aspect of the sample is used to avoid "listing" bias and provides representation of both listed and unlisted numbers (including not-yet-listed numbers). The design of the sample achieves this representation by random generation of the last two digits of telephone numbers selected on the basis of their area code, telephone exchange, and bank number.

Non-response in telephone interviews produces some known biases in survey-derived estimates because participation tends to vary for different subgroups of the population, and these subgroups are likely to vary also on questions of substantive interest. In order to compensate for these known biases, the sample data are weighted in analysis. The demographic weighting parameters are derived from a special analysis of the most recently available Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (March 2000). This analysis produces population parameters for the demographic characteristics of adults age 18 or older, living in households that contain a telephone. These parameters are then compared with the sample characteristics to construct sample weights. The weights are derived using an iterative technique that simultaneously balances the distribution of all weighting parameters.

Material on comScore Network's methodology can be found at http://www.comscore.com/about/about_method.htm.